

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CONGRATULATING THE ST. MARY'S COLLEGE SAILING TEAM ON WINNING TWO 2007 NCAA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 18, 2007

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, as the Washington Post so aptly put it last month, "tiny colleges in rural Southern Maryland aren't supposed to win national championships in anything." But apparently, no one told that to the young men and women of the St. Mary's College sailing team, who won two out of the three legs of the NCAA sailing "triple crown" in 2007.

The Lady Seahawks swept the national title in convincing fashion—besting the next closest competitor by 44 points—and leading sailor and Olympic hopeful, Adrienne Patterson, was named female sailor of the year. In the team race, St. Mary's prevailed in a much closer battle, beating a very strong Yale team by a score of 12 to 11. And while the Seahawk sailors fell just short of their goal of winning all three major sailing championships in one year by taking the coed national title as well, they still managed to finish sixth in that leg of the competition and cement their place among the elite sailing teams throughout all of the NCAA.

St. Mary's College had won 10 national titles entering the 2007 season—and its performance in this year's NCAA championships is proof positive its legacy of greatness is not only intact, but growing stronger with each passing year.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to offer my heartfelt congratulations to the 2007 St. Mary's College Seahawks, their fans, their friends and their families. And I wish them all continued success in whatever life holds in store.

PASSPORT BACKLOG REDUCTION ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation. The passport backlog has affected millions of people's travel plans, and I know in Houston, our district offices have been receiving calls on nearly a daily basis from constituents whose travel plans have been affected by the delay.

I visited the Houston Passport Office last month, and was amazed to learn people were arriving there hours before the office opened in order to get service. The staff at the Houston office has been working nights and weekends to clear the backlog, but there is only so much they can do.

Despite having known this increase would be coming since Congress passed the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004, the Administration did not prepare for this increase and as a result, State Department employees and the American public is paying the price.

This was only the first phase of implementing the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative—the second phase, which will require all individuals traveling to or from the United States by land and sea, could see an even larger demand for passports, especially in border states like Texas where people have friends and family across the border.

Last week, Maura Harty, Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Consular Affairs, testified in front of the House Foreign Affairs Committee that her office anticipates the demand for passports will continue to grow and will be approximately 23 million in 200, and as high as 30 million by 2010.

The State Department must now do what they should have done over the last six months to a year, and hire additional employees to handle what appears will be a permanent increase in the number of passport applications they will be receiving annually.

This bill alleviates some of the backlog, but the State Department needs to ensure they have the people and systems in place to prevent this from happening in the future. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting S. 966.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TOM COLE

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 18, 2007

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably detained on rollcall vote number 621, agreeing to H. Res. 533 which was to provide for consideration of H.R. 2956. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

PASSPORT BACKLOG REDUCTION ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. EDWARD R. ROYCE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, S. 966 will help provide relief for the massive influx of passport applications due to a change in passport rules. This problem has frustrated many constituents in all of our districts.

Last week, the House Foreign Affairs Committee held a hearing focusing on this issue. As a result of questions I raised, it became apparent to Members of the Committee that the demands on the Bureau of Consular Affairs to get passports to Americans as fast as possible does raise fraud concerns. While the

number of adjudicators has gone up, the number charged with investigating passport fraud, has not.

In that respect, I'd like to thank Chairman LANTOS for including additional language that would allow for the hiring of retirees to assist in investigation of fraud in connection with an application for a passport. These additional investigators are critical, as many times they uncover a broader fraud ring. We should be able to serve Americans in a timely matter and ensure their security. This bill will help do that.

PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYER-EMPLOYEE COOPERATION ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. BILL SALI

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 17, 2007

Mr. SALI. Madam Speaker, yesterday, the House voted on a measure that would require public sector employees at the State and local level to set up a system of monopoly bargaining. H.R. 980, the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act, is well-intended, as are most bills that come before this body. Yet its effects would be profoundly negative, both on fire and police departments nationwide and on the way Congress operates with respect to our most fundamental allegiance, the Federal Constitution.

As we all know, the tenth amendment to the Constitution states, "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved for the States respectively, or to the people." Yet with H.R. 980, Congress is plainly overriding carefully crafted State labor laws with a single stroke. This bill dictates to States how they must deal with unionization issues, which is a serious abridgement of the role of Congress envisioned by our Founders.

We took an oath here, Madam Speaker—an oath to uphold a Constitution that does not give us the power to ride roughshod over States whenever it strikes our fancy.

Moreover, the practical effect of this legislation would be disastrous. As the International Chiefs of Police have noted, "By mandating a 'one-size fits all' approach to labor-management relations, H.R. 980 ignores the fact that every jurisdiction has unique needs and therefore requires the freedom to manage its public safety workforce in the manner that they have determined to be the most effective."

Worse yet, H.R. 980 would give the Federal Labor Relations Board the responsibility of overseeing labor-management laws in virtually every jurisdiction in the Nation, from municipalities to counties to States.

Not only is Congress extending its meddling arms into matters reserved by the Constitution for the States, but now, some of my friends across the aisle want to cut funding for the only Federal agency that reviews union

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

abuses. As John Fund put it in the Wall Street Journal, "The new Democratic Congress has finally found a government agency whose budget it wants to cut: an obscure Labor Department office that monitors the compliance of unions with federal law."

Allow me to quote Mr. Fund at some length:

In the past six years, the Office of Labor Management Standards, or OLMS, has helped secure the convictions of 775 corrupt union officials and court-ordered restitution to union members of over \$70 million in dues. The House is set to vote Thursday on a proposal to chop 20% from the OLMS budget. Every other Labor Department enforcement agency is due for a budget increase, and overall the Congress has added \$935 million to the Bush administration's budget request for Labor. The only office the Democrats want to cut back is the one engaged in union oversight . . . GOP Rep. John Kline of Minnesota will offer an amendment Thursday to restore \$3 million of the \$11 million planned cutback in OLMS's budget, so its budget would merely be restored to its 2007 level. Whatever sums are spent on union disclosure reports appear to be a good investment. Unions held \$22 billion in assets in 2005, and you'd think that a modest enforcement budget, representing less than 0.003% of that amount shouldn't be the only target for cuts by budget appropriators.

Madam Speaker, allowing workers to determine whether or not they wish to join unions is consistent with the American principle of personal freedom and self-determination. A Federal law concerning public sector union membership that would render State laws irrelevant is unconstitutional, reckless, and unnecessary. And reducing funding for the one Federal agency that pursues notorious union corruption is incomprehensible in its own right—but especially coming from a new majority that heralds its own allegiance to the highest ethical standards.

These things must not be allowed. These are matters of "liberty and justice for all" we must not take lightly.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 18, 2007

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Madam Speaker, on rollcall Nos. 607–629 I was absent. I would like the RECORD to show that, had I been present, I would have voted as follows: 607—"no"; 608—"no"; 609—"yes"; 610—"yes"; 611—"yes"; 612—"yes"; 613—"yes"; 614—"yes"; 615—"no"; 616—"yes"; 617—"yes"; 618—"yes"; 619—"yes"; 620—"no"; 621—"no"; 622—"no"; 623—"no"; 624—"no"; 625—"no"; 626—"no"; 627—"yes"; 628—"yes"; 629—"yes."

PROMOTING AMERICAN AGRICULTURAL AND MEDICAL EXPORTS TO CUBA ACT OF 2007

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 18, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues in Congress to lend sup-

port to The Promoting American Agricultural and Medical Exports to Cuba Act of 2007 (H.R. 2819). This bill addresses several important issues related to our relationship with Cuba and is intended to remove obstacles to legitimate transactions.

First, it removes pre-payment requirement for U.S. agricultural exports to Cuba. It also allows for direct payments to U.S. banks for purchases by Cuba, instead of third-country banks. From 2000 to 2004, American agricultural producers were allowed to embark on a trading relationship with Cuba. During the 4 year period, agricultural trade with Cuba grew from nothing to being a \$380 million dollar trading industry. However through sanctions placed by the administration, this lucrative trading relationship was terminated after the administration placed barriers. Our American agricultural producers have potential to gain much-needed sales revenue in the Cuban market. Our agricultural sector has recently experienced declining sales numbers. Cuba, a new trading partner, will be a good customer and revitalize this area. It seems illogical that while other nations are taking advantage of this lucrative trading opportunity, the administration is denying us access to this opportunity. This bill is about America's right to prosper by participating and competing in international trade.

This legislation provides for the lift of the travel ban and also for the expedited issuance of U.S. visas for Cubans involved in agricultural purchases. As Americans, we pride ourselves on how our liberties are protected and respected by our government. However, banning American citizens to travel to Cuba is a blatant infringement on our democratic freedom to travel without restrictions. It is not appropriate for the government to prevent citizens to visit Cuba. Also, Cuban Americans should have the right to visit their native country without limitations placed on them. Scholars, architects, travelers and students should have an opportunity for cultural exchanges with Cuba.

Another provision included in the bill would eliminate on-site verification requirements for U.S. medicines and medical supplies, which currently is a major impediment on sales. This restriction makes the process of exporting medical goods more costly and difficult.

This act would recognize certain Cuban trademarks, while protecting U.S. trademarks there, by repealing Section 211 of the FY 1999 Omnibus Appropriations Act, which bars U.S. courts from hearing claims by foreign nationals asserting rights to trademarks similar to or associated with expropriated property. Section 211 currently violates the regulations of the World Trade Organization. Cuba has recently threatened to not uphold trademark protection for American companies because of the unfair balance between our country and theirs.

Finally, it also provides proceeds to fund an agricultural export promotion program for agricultural export promotion activities with respect to Cuba during a 5 year period. It is imperative that we find new markets to income opportunities for our farming community; therefore, this bill provides for support of an Agricultural Export Promotion Program with respect to Cuba to be administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This bill would allow us to achieve this.

It is time to depart from our flawed foreign policy on Cuba and normalize our relations

with this nation. I strongly urge you to join me in Promoting the American Agricultural and Medical Exports to Cuba Act in 2007.

TRIBUTE TO THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MARIN COMMUNITY CLINIC

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 18, 2007

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the 35th anniversary of the Marin Community Clinic. The Marin Community Clinic has consistently provided high quality primary care to the residents of the community since 1972. Originally established as a free clinic in a Mill Valley Community Church, Marin Community Clinic has grown to become a federally qualified health center serving as a critical source of health care for all residents across Marin County who cannot afford medical insurance.

Throughout my district and across the Nation, the need for health care services among low income and uninsured residents continues to grow. Many residents who cannot afford care turn to hospital emergency rooms as their only health care option. Not only does this fail to meet the needs of patients, it also dramatically increases the costs of health care for everyone. Designed to offer a more cost-effective and affordable option than emergency rooms for non-emergency care, Marin Community Clinic receives at least 5–15 referrals from hospitals every day.

Marin Community Clinic also serves as a medical home to over 13,000 patients each year, 95 percent of whom live within 200 percent of the Federal poverty level. Between 1991 and 2007, patient visits have increased from 5,000 to nearly 50,000 annually, representing a 9-fold increase. Currently, 75 percent of the Clinic's patients are women and children. Today, Marin Community Clinic operates one clinic on the grounds of Marin General Hospital in Greenbrae and another clinic in Novato for residents of northern Marin. Next year, the organization plans to open a third clinic in San Rafael to respond to the growing community need for health care and dental services in the community.

As the clinic has grown, the organization has also developed a unique model of care that integrates physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, nurses, mental health clinicians, and case workers to deliver high quality, compassionate care. In addition, Marin Community Clinic also provides preventive health education for early breast cancer detection and for patients with chronic conditions like asthma, diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Marin Community Clinic also operates a "Reach Out and Read" literacy program for children.

I commend Marin Community Clinic for their dedication, commitment and outstanding service for the citizens of Marin County during the last 35 years and I look forward to their continued success in meeting the health care needs with quality care for many more years to come.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SUE WILKINS MYRICK

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 18, 2007

Mrs. MYRICK. Madam Speaker, I was unable to participate in the following votes. If I had been present, I would have voted as follows: July 16, 2007—rollcall vote 630, on motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1980, to authorize appropriations for the Housing Assistance Council—I would have voted “aye”, rollcall vote 631, on motion to suspend the rules and pass, as amended, H.R. 1982, the Rural Housing and Economic Development Improvement Act of 2007, I would have voted “aye”, rollcall vote 632, on motion to suspend the rules and pass, as amended, H.R. 799, Appalachian Regional Development Act Amendments—I would have voted “nay.”

A TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE
CAROL ANN CAMPBELL**HON. ROBERT A. BRADY**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 18, 2007

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor my dear friend and City Councilwoman, the Honorable Carol Ann Campbell. Just like the distinguished Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, Carol Ann is the scion of a great political family. Her early years at the side of her father, the famous Edgar Campbell, prepared her well for her future leadership role. But it is her inner strength that plays the biggest part in making her who she is.

Everyone who knows Carol Campbell knows that she is a force of nature. Her drive and tenacity are matched only by her compassion and her loyalty. She has devoted her life to helping others. Her dedication to her neighbors led to tremendous public investment in her district during her time in City Council. Her advocacy on behalf of the African American community led to election of record numbers of judges and other officials. She has been the confidant of speakers, mayors, and governors and of presidents. And I am proud to say that she is my advisor, my strongest supporter and my best friend.

Madam Speaker, there aren't enough hours in the day to list the accomplishments of this great lady. But, I am proud to ask all of my colleagues to join me in saluting her today.

HONORING UNITED PARCEL
SERVICE

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN A. YARMUTH

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. YARMUTH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of my home town of Louisville's largest employer and one of its greatest corporate citizens: The United Parcel Service, UPS. For one quarter of UPS's 100 year history, it has located its international hub in

Louisville, Kentucky forging a partnership that has facilitated tremendous growth for both the company and our city.

Louisville has undoubtedly been good for UPS. They have built a four million square feet facility that processes more than 300,000 packages an hour, using 122 miles of conveyor belt and enough fiber optic cable to stretch from coast to coast four times. UPS went public with the highest initial public offering in the history of the New York Stock Exchange, reached a milestone that saw its services reach an astounding two-thirds of the world's six billion people, and—keeping with the times—just won the Clean Air Excellence Award for its “Green Fleet”, which has logged more than 100 million miles.

But UPS has also been very good for Louisville. Let me tell you a little bit about what Brown has done for us.

UPS employs 20,000 members of our community and will hire 5,000 more after it completes a one billion dollar renovation to our airport—only the latest major improvement at least in part due to UPS's influence. But that is just a fraction of the story. Because they are not merely jobs, but good ones. We are fortunate that our largest employer pays wages on which a family can be raised, health benefits for personnel, and even college tuition for part-time workers. Through the Metropolitan partnership with the city and area universities, UPS has paid the tuition for thousands of Louisville students, giving them a chance to pursue fulfilling careers at UPS while earning a college degree.

Of the four billion people around the world who benefit from UPS, few can claim the advantages we gain in Louisville—not just the employees, but all who are helped by their economic development initiatives, community service, and commitment to our community. I congratulate UPS—the world's largest package delivery company—on its first successful century and hope that the next one yields continued success in our home of Louisville, Kentucky.

PASSPORT BACKLOG REDUCTION
ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, despite the backlog of passport applications and the lack of sufficient staff to accommodate the workload, passport agency personnel have done a remarkable job of assisting my constituents in getting passports. The National Passport Information Center, the Washington, DC, Passport Agency, and the San Francisco Passport Agency, in particular, have been extremely helpful. The men and women in the State Department who are meeting this administrative crisis should be acknowledged for the extra effort they have been making to ensure U.S. citizens are able to travel abroad to work, vacation, participate in church and service projects, and attend educational programs. I rise in support of S. 966 and urge my colleagues to vote in favor of the bill.

RECOGNIZING 2007 AS THE YEAR OF THE RIGHTS OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN COLOMBIA

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 11, 2007

Mr. McGOVERN. Madam Speaker, last week the U.S. House of Representatives unanimously approved H. Res. 426, recognizing 2007 as the Year of the Rights of the Internally Displaced in Colombia. The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner on Refugees, UNHCR, praised its passage, noting that “It is the first time the U.S. Congress has singled out forced displacement in Colombia as one of the worst humanitarian crises on the American continent.”

More than one-third of the over 3 million internally displaced people in Colombia are Afro-Colombians or indigenous peoples. On July 11, 2007, the Association of Internally Displaced Afro-Colombians, AFRODES, issued a statement welcoming the action taken by the U.S. Congress in passing H. Res. 426 and bringing attention to the plight of Colombia's internally displaced.

I encourage my House colleagues to reflect on the words of Colombia's Afro-Colombian community and I welcome the opportunity to submit the statement of AFRODES into the RECORD of the debate on H. Res. 426.

[July 11, 2007]

INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT IN COLOMBIA AND ITS
IMPACT IN AFRO-COLOMBIAN TERRITORIES
AND COMMUNITIES

In Colombia, a chronic and sustained humanitarian and human rights crisis persists, due to the ongoing presence of the causes of forced displacement, and the limited and contradictory security policies that the national government has adopted to stop the exodus of the population. Under the government of President Álvaro Uribe, military confrontations between the public security forces and illegal armed groups have intensified; during President Uribe's first term, there were 8,001 such confrontations, an increase of 149 percent over the 3,211 which occurred during the previous government of President Andrés Pastrana. This shows there is a greater military presence in the country, but that does not necessarily imply that conditions for the security of the civilian population are being met. In other words, there are no guarantees for the security of internally displaced communities to return to their regions of origin.

Defining the dimensions of the problem of internal displacement should be a priority, in order to define the conditions faced by victims of the internal armed conflict and thereby establish peace, justice and reparations. The System of Information on Forced Displacement and Human Rights (SISDHES), which has been operated by CODHES since 1995 and which takes into account data from the Episcopal Conference of Colombia from 1985–1994, indicates that around 3,832,527 people have been displaced during the last 20 years in Colombia (from January 1, 1985 through June 30, 2006). The United Nations just recently stated in a June 2007 report that the number of internally displaced in Colombia has reached 3,000,000. According to the U.N., out of the 13 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) their organization attended to over the past year, three million—

or 23 percent of the world total—are Colombian. This according to the U.N. brings Colombia to the undesirable first position of the greatest number of IDPs in the world. Yet the Colombian government reports only 1,877,328 IDPs for the period from January of 1995–June of 2005.

Due to the lack of sufficient political will on the part of the government to attend to the IDP population, the Colombian Constitutional Court has delivered two rulings with the purpose of protecting the rights of the internally displaced: Ruling C-370 of 2005, relating to Law 975 of 2005, through which the Constitutional Court defines the scope of the rights and guarantees due to victims of the internal armed conflict under the system of transitional justice.

The Constitutional Court also issued Decree 218 of 2006, following Ruling T-025 of 2004 which declared the state of things to be unconstitutional in Colombia and ordered the government to develop a public policy designed to guarantee the effective protection of the rights of the internally displaced.

This decree examines the completion of the orders established through decrees No. 176, 177 and 178 of 2005; its principal conclusion is that the situation of unconstitutionality has yet to be overcome, while the necessary measures are not being taken to do so.

Finally, the Civil Commission for the Evaluation of Completion of Ruling T-025 and the Public Policy of Forced Displacement was formed as a plural and diverse coalition of civil society dedicated to overcoming displacement, at the same time that new protests and proposals for strengthening organizations of the internally displaced are being formed by the affected population.

Decree 218 illustrates the structural problems with the lack of a public policy for forced displacement and opens the possibility for greater public debate to examine the report presented by the government on September 13, 2006, such as the use of rights-based progress indicators.

We would also like to applaud the 42 cosponsors of H. Res. 426 and in particular our Afrodescendant brother Donald Payne and humanitarian James McGovern for raising the visibility of the plight of the many internally displaced Afro-Colombians to the U.S. Congress. In the last decade, especially during the last 5 years, internal displacement has intensified in areas of the Pacific Coast, in the departments of Nariño, Valle del Cauca, Cauca and Chocó in the collectively titled lands of Afro-Colombians. The particular characteristics of these displacements show them to be planned and deliberate, in order to cause communities to vacate their territories. This is corroborated by the study carried out by AFRODES and Global Rights in 2005, which illustrates that 61.73 percent of those people with collective titles to land in 50 municipalities with Afro-Colombian populations have been displaced from their territories. Most alarming is that there currently exists no public policy for attention to Afro-Colombian displaced populations, while the humanitarian crisis in their territories continues to worsen.

Finally, as an organization of internally displaced persons and in the name of many more who have lost their territories in Colombia, we appreciate and commend the efforts undertaken by the U.S. Congress and the international community to raise visibility of this humanitarian tragedy, specifically through H. Res. 426 in the U.S. House of Representatives. By working in partnership with the United States, the United Nations and many religious and non-governmental organizations, our communities can once again live with dignity and respect for their rights.

TRIBUTE TO FATHER FRANCIS HUND

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 18, 2007

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Father Francis Hund, who celebrates his 25th anniversary in the priesthood this Sunday, July 22nd.

Born July 31, 1956 in Paxico, KS, he was the oldest of Wilfred and Margaret Hund's eight children. He graduated from Paxico High School in 1974 and received a bachelor's degree from Benedictine College in Atchison, KS, in 1978, where he majored in music with a focus on organ. Although he had considered a vocation to the priesthood, he hadn't shared his thoughts with his parents; they thought he would be a music teacher until they read his career choice printed in his senior organ recital program!

He was selected to do his seminary studies in Rome at the North American College and was ordained to the priesthood at his home parish in Paxico in 1982. He served as associate pastor at four Shawnee Mission, KS, parishes: Queen of the Holy Rosary, Cure of Ars, St. Joseph; and Holy Trinity, before entering a graduate program in liturgical studies at St. John's University in Collegeville, MN. Returning in 1990 he served three rural parishes at Burlington, Waverly and Westphalia, KS, and was campus minister at Washburn in Topeka.

In 1992, Fr. Francis was appointed pastor of St. Theresa's in Perry, KS, and also St. Aloysius in Meriden, KS in 1993. In addition to pastoring those two parishes, he was appointed Director of the Archdiocesan Office of Liturgy and Worship, a position he held for 9 years prior to his appointment as pastor to Good Shepherd Catholic Church in Shawnee, KS, in 2001. He currently serves this parish of 1,700 families as well as being chairman of the Johnson County Regional Priests and a member of the archdiocesan Priests Personnel Board.

His family currently includes his mother, 2 brothers, 5 sisters, in-laws and 24 nieces and nephews. Madam Speaker, I know that all Members of the House of Representatives join with me in paying tribute to this dedicated servant of God upon the 25th anniversary of his entering the priesthood.

FREE THE ISRAELI SOLDIERS

SPEECH OF

HON. ROBERT WEXLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 12, 2007

Mr. WEXLER. Madam Speaker, I rise in recognition of the 1-year anniversary of the kidnapping of Eldad Regev and Ehud Goldwasser, two soldiers in the Israeli Defense Force who were kidnapped by Hezbollah operatives on the border with Lebanon on July 12, 2006. Their kidnapping came only a few weeks after the abduction of Gilad Shalit, an IDF officer seized by Hamas militants on June 25, 2006, during a horrific attack near Kibbutz Kerem Shalom, on the border of the Gaza Strip.

These three brave young men are among eight Israeli soldiers kidnapped or missing in action over the last 25 years. Staff Sergeants Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, and Yehuda Katz have been missing since June 11, 1982, after a battle at Sultan Yakoub in Lebanon. Major Ron Arad was captured on October 16, 1986, when his aircraft was shot down inside Lebanon. Israeli soldier Guy Hever disappeared on August 17, 1997, from an army base in the southern Golan Heights.

Since my first day in the United States Congress, I have made advocating for the safe return of all Israeli soldiers a priority. During an official trip to Israel last July, I met with Benny Regev, brother of Eldad Regev, to express my deepest sympathy and concern and assure him of America's commitment to securing his brother's release. Today, I urge my colleagues to join me in renewing our commitment to secure the release of all Israeli prisoners of war and to hold those individuals, organizations, and governments involved in these abductions accountable for their violation of international law. In marking the anniversary of the kidnapping of these brave soldiers, we should also acknowledge the sacrifice of their families and of the Israeli people as they continue to defend their borders in the ongoing struggle for regional stability and peace.

As Israel's strongest ally and friend, the United States must continue to support Israel's right to self defense, and advocate for the safe return of all of Israeli soldiers missing in action and being held as prisoners of war.

TRIBUTE TO PASTOR WANDA McNEILL

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 18, 2007

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I recognize Pastor Wanda McNeill for her 17 years of tireless work as Executive Director of Washington, DC's Southeast Ministry, which she helped create in 1990. Pastor McNeill, on the surface, was not an obvious candidate to take on such work in an inner city neighborhood, having been born and raised in Sioux City, Iowa. But Pastor McNeill has touched the lives of thousands in Washington, DC, and this city will be forever grateful for her dedication to those in need. We wish her well and Godspeed as she leaves our Nation's Capital to accept a call to lead a parish in Lake Preston, South Dakota.

Whereas Pastor Wanda McNeill is a spiritual leader who, through her faith in God, has answered His call by dedicating her life's work to serving those in need;

Whereas Pastor Wanda McNeill was born on February 21, 1944 in Sioux City, Iowa, and was raised on a family farm along with her sister Stella by William and Louise Edwards;

Whereas Pastor Wanda McNeill in her earlier life was a foster parent with her late husband Frank McNeill to 12 children;

Whereas Pastor Wanda McNeill earned a Diploma in Nursing at Iowa Lutheran Hospital, Des Moines, Iowa in 1965 and has been a licensed Registered Nurse in Iowa, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Washington, DC;

Whereas Pastor Wanda McNeill served the citizens of North Carolina as a Vista Volunteer

working with low-income families from 1966 to 1968, and then as a public health nurse until 1984, and during that time, founded the Yancey County Hospice Agency in Burnsville, North Carolina in 1982;

Whereas Pastor Wanda McNeill earned a B.S. in professional arts, psychology emphasis, from St. Joseph's College, North Windham, Massachusetts in 1984, graduated from Lutheran Theological Seminary in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania in 1988, was ordained in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in 1989, and earned a doctorate of ministry from Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 2005;

Whereas Pastor Wanda McNeill has held the positions of Assistant Pastor, Associate Pastor, and Pastor at the Lutheran Church of Reformation in Washington, DC, since 1990 and has served our Capitol Hill neighborhood faithfully for 17 years;

Whereas Pastor Wanda McNeill co-founded a non-profit social justice ministry named Southeast Ministry in the Anacostia neighborhood of southeast Washington, DC, in 1990 in response to expressed community needs for educational, cultural, and employment programs that lead those in need to self-sufficiency;

Whereas Pastor Wanda McNeill through Southeast Ministry has reached thousands of men and women with education and job-related information services, increased their basic education skills and assisted them in passing the GED, prepared them to secure jobs through a curriculum of African-American culture, history, parenting, health and vocational assessment and in placement in training, employment and education;

Whereas Pastor Wanda McNeill's personal decorations include the Community Service Award from Anacostia-Congress Heights Partnership in 1991, Women of Achievement Award from the Zonta Club of Washington, DC, in 2000, and the Bob Woodson Award for special accomplishments from the National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise in 2005;

Resolved, That the United States House of Representatives recognizes Pastor Wanda McNeill for her commitment to a life of service to the citizens of the United States, especially the poor and underprivileged who society has passed by, for her continued dedication to this life-long calling, and for touching the lives of thousands with her work in the poorest neighborhoods of the District of Columbia, our Nation's Capitol.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SHELLEY BERKLEY

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 18, 2007

Ms. BERKLEY. Madam Speaker, because I was out of the country last week on an important diplomatic and constituent services mission, I was unable to vote on rollcall Nos. 607 through 629. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall Nos. 607–610, 613–615, 617–624, and 628–629. I would have voted "no" on rollcall Nos. 611–612, 616, and 625–627.

CONGRATULATING THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 18, 2007

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Resolution 294, which commends the Kingdom of Lesotho for the enactment of a law to improve the status of married women and ensure the access of married women to property rights. Lesotho has made incredible progress towards gender equality, and I hope this Congress will recognize these steps forward.

This landlocked country of about 12,000 square miles has achieved a significant milestone towards gender equality by legally eliminating any deprivation of property rights for women. It gives me great pride to recognize not only the Kingdom of Lesotho, but also the idea that gender equality can be achieved in developing countries. Through the diligent efforts of many women's rights organizations, as well as the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the women of Lesotho now can turn to their court to protect their rights.

I am especially proud that this resolution includes continued support for International Women's Day, which we celebrate annually on March 8. Earlier this year the House passed House Resolution 149, legislation I introduced that supports the goals of International Women's Day. International Women's Day recognizes and honors the women around the world who have fought and continue to struggle for equality in the face of adversity. What is happening in Lesotho is a manifestation of the actions of those persistent women.

I want to again congratulate the Kingdom of Lesotho for enacting this crucial legislation and proving again that gender discrimination is simply unacceptable. I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the achievements of Lesotho.

IN MEMORY OF STEPHEN R. DEMBSKI

HON. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 18, 2007

Mr. ROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, words can hardly express our admiration and gratitude as we note the tragic passing of an awe-inspiring civil servant. On Sunday, July 15, 2007 the community of Ridgfield Park, the County of Bergen, and the State of New Jersey lost a great hero upon the passing of Stephen R. Dembski, 41, after battling a major fire in neighboring Bogota. I join Steve's family, friends, and the entire community in mourning the loss of such a dedicated public servant.

A devoted husband and father to his wife Nancy and two children Kyle and Raymond, Steve was a pillar of our community. Steve came from a long line of firefighters, starting off as a junior firefighter when he was 16, becoming a full-fledged firefighter at the Ridgfield Park Hook and Ladder Company 2 at age 18, and later serving as chief for 2 years. His more than two decades of public

service and his commitment to his duties as a firefighter reveal his extraordinary dedication to the safety and security of his family, friends, and community.

Firefighters like Steve are willing to give their lives to protect the safety of American citizens and willfully advance to the front lines of danger to provide assistance to those around them. Each time firefighters courageously rush into burning buildings and willingly lay their lives on the line for their fellow citizens, their unshakeable devotion to others leads us to place our lives and priorities in perspective and also helps reaffirm in the hearts of all Americans what is really important in life. Firefighters like Steve are essential to our communities and help to ensure the safety and security of our great nation. Each firefighter is a testament to the indomitable and caring spirit that drives our nation and makes America the incredible country it is today. This nation owes a tremendous debt of gratitude to Steve Dembski for his service to our community. May God bless the Dembski family.

HONORING DALE D. PETERSON UPON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 18, 2007

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, my colleague, Mrs. ELLEN O. TAUSCHER, and I rise in honor of Dale D. Peterson who is retiring after more than 40 years of service to his country, our community, and the educational system of Contra Costa County.

After earning a degree from Contra Costa College, Dale Peterson began his long career of public service by enlisting in the United States Marine Corps, serving from 1965 to 1969. Having completed this service to his country, Dale achieved his journeyman status after completing a 4-year electrical apprenticeship.

From 1973 to 1993, Dale worked as general electric contractor, a foreman, and a superintendent. His service during these years involved the responsibilities of managing commercial, residential and industrial electrical construction jobs in Contra Costa County. During this time Dale also served as the Assistant Business Manager of the IBEW Local 302 and on several committees of that same labor union.

For over 20 years, Dale Peterson has continued to share his time and talent with our community by serving on a number of Boards and Councils. His work as a Trustee of the Contra Costa Building Trade Council and as a member of the Contra Costa Central Labor Council reflect Dale Peterson's continued dedication to his fellow tradesmen and the labor movement in this county. Dale's work as a Contra Costa County Library Commissioner and as a member of the Board of Directors for both the East County Business Education Alliance and the Delta Advocacy Foundation demonstrates his enduring commitment to education and educational reform.

In 1991, Dale Peterson became a Parent Education Facilitator at the Family Stress Center where he served for 8 years. In 2000 he

enrolled in a Cornell University Course on Mutual Gains Bargaining. Over a period of 2 years, Dale completed three courses on land use planning, urban redevelopment, and environmental and planning law at a UC Berkeley Extension Campus.

Since 2004 Dale Peterson has mobilized the construction industry to support high quality school reform in Contra Costa County and was instrumental in the creation of two high school career academies.

Throughout his illustrious career, Dale Peterson has been a strong and steady voice for labor and education in Contra Costa County. He has always been a champion of youth and community programs and of preparing our children for higher education and the workforce. This continued commitment to labor and education in Contra Costa County have set Dale Peterson apart as a leader in our community.

Today we recognize Dale Peterson's enduring strength, visionary leadership, and his lasting commitment to the workers, students and families of Contra Costa County and our Nation.

Madam Speaker, please join me and my colleague, Mrs. ELLEN O. TAUSCHER, in recognizing Dale D. Peterson as he retires from a long and honorable career.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate on February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place, and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled, and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, July 19, 2007 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

JULY 20

9:30 a.m.

Appropriations

Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine youth violence, focusing on the efficacy of mentoring children.

SD-116

JULY 23

3 p.m.

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

To hold hearings to examine energy and democracy, focusing on whether the development of democracy is incompatible with the development of a country's energy resources.

SD-419

JULY 24

9:30 a.m.

Judiciary

To continue oversight hearings to examine the Department of Justice.

SH-216

10 a.m.

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold hearings to examine the protection of children on the internet.

SR-253

Finance

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the government tax policy in farm country.

SD-215

Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Michael W. Michalak, of Michigan, to be Ambassador to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and Eric G. John, of Indiana, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Thailand.

SD-419

Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine the BioShield and Preparedness programs, focusing on improvements needed for epidemics.

SD-628

Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Jim Nussle, of Iowa, to be Di-

rector of the Office of Management and Budget.

SD-342

2 p.m.

Veterans' Affairs

Business meeting to markup the nomination of Charles L. Hopkins, of Massachusetts, to be an Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs (Operations, Preparedness, Security and Law Enforcement).

Room to be announced

2:30 p.m.

Environment and Public Works

Private Sector and Consumer Solutions to Global Warming and Wildlife Protection Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine economic and international issues, focusing on global warming policy.

SD-406

Intelligence

To hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters.

SH-219

JULY 25

9:30 a.m.

Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine S. 732, to empower Peace Corps volunteers.

SD-419

Veterans' Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing to examine Department of Veterans Affairs health care funding.

SD-562

10 a.m.

Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Business meeting to consider S. 625, to protect the public health by providing the Food and Drug Administration with certain authority to regulate tobacco products, S. 1183, to enhance and further research into paralysis and to improve rehabilitation and the quality of life for persons living with paralysis and other physical disabilities, S. 579, to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences to make grants for the development and operation of research centers regarding environmental factors that may be related to the etiology of breast cancer, S. 898, to amend the Public Health Service Act to fund breakthroughs in Alzheimer's disease research while providing more help to caregivers and increasing public education about prevention, an original bill entitled, "Newborn Screening Saves Lives Act of 2007", and the nominations of Diane Auer Jones, of Maryland, to be Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education, Department of Education, David C. Geary, of Missouri, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the National Board for Education Sciences, and Miguel Campaneria, of Puerto Rico, to be a Member of the National Council on the Arts.

Room to be announced

Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Dennis R. Schrader, of Maryland, to be Deputy Administrator for National Preparedness, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security.

SD-342

Small Business and Entrepreneurship

To hold an oversight hearing to examine Gulf Coast disaster loans, focusing on

the future of the disaster assistance program.

SR-428A

Joint Economic Committee

To hold hearings to examine the national foreclosure crisis, focusing on subprime mortgage fallout.

SH-216

2 p.m.

Environment and Public Works

Superfund and Environmental Health Subcommittee

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the EPA's Environmental Justice programs.

SD-406

2:30 p.m.

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Interstate Commerce, Trade, and Tourism Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine United States trade relations with China.

SR-253

3 p.m.

Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Federal Financial Management, Government Information, Federal Services, and International Security Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine the implementation of the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act. (Public Law 109-435).

SD-342

JULY 26

10 a.m.

Budget

Business meeting to consider the nomination of Jim Nussle, of Iowa, to be Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

SD-608

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold hearings to examine preparation taken for digital television transition.

SR-253

2:30 p.m.

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure, Safety and Security Subcommittee

To continue hearings to examine the Railroad Safety Enhancement Act.

SR-253

Intelligence

To hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters.

SH-219

JULY 31

10 a.m.

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Ronald Spoehel, of Virginia, to be Chief Financial Officer, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, William G. Sutton, Jr., of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Commerce, Thomas J. Barrett, of Alaska, to be Deputy Secretary of Transportation, and Paul R. Brubaker, of Virginia, to be Administrator of the Research and Innovative Technology Administration, Department of Transportation.

SR-253

9:30 p.m.

Veterans' Affairs

To hold hearings to examine Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense education issues.

SD-562